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WITHIN THE MAGIC CIRCLE

M. J. Graeber

WHILE READING the May 2002 edition of *Fate* magazine, I was struck by the viewpoints of Rosemary Ellen Guiley PhD in her "Gateways" article on crop circles; and those of Ms Lucy Pringle in her "The Mind of God" piece on the same phenomenon.

In fact, their stories were so thought provoking and well written that I was compelled to dust off one of my old X-files, in search of a crop circle report that I had investigated way back in 1992 at Limerick, Pa.

When is a crop circle not a circle? (UFO researchers descend on a wheat field to find out)

As Tom Carey (the Mutual UFO Network Section Leader for South-east Pennsylvania) and I entered the wheat field, it was chilly and the sky was grey. I was thinking; about the strange similarities between the UFO legend and the crop circle phenomenon's ever-changing character. How the small circles of the 1950s and 1960s, which were believed to be UFO landing sites at the time, had grown increasingly larger and extraordinarily complex in design. How formations were starting to pop up all over the planet and how strange sounds were reported to have emanated from them.

I was thinking about the various rumours and theories that had sprung up about the formations and how the circles were thought to be linked to Stonehenge, and their sounds matched up with musical tones; that is, with the exception of the note 'A'. Although I had researched UFO landing reports for more than twenty years, this was to be my first experience with the investigation of a crop circle formation; and, even though Mr Carey and I hadn't any preconceived notions concerning the circle enigma, we had both read a little about it in the UFO literature and had seen a couple of TV news segments and specials about the phenomenon. But, because I resided in Montgomery County and was actually in the vicinity of the affected area just prior to a short-lived but severe storm passing through it, we were on the look out, so to speak, for evidence of a possible wheat fall caused by high winds, and a very heavy

downpour that occurred the evening before the damage was discovered.

My first perception of the field's condition seemed to confirm this suspicion; but we still examined the wheat shafts very closely, searched for scorched, bent or broken shaft samples, and even looked about for evidence of foot trails leading to or from the damaged crops. We performed a radiological survey of the area because it is near a nuclear power plant (only background readings noted) and even tried to imagine how some of the formations might have been made by pranksters with the aid of an implement of some kind. We did this because one particularly large formation looked like an intoxicated person's rendition of a dinosaur, while several others looked as if something had been carelessly dragged or rolled through them.

Investigative considerations

As ufologists, we were fully aware that the crop circle mystery has been tentatively linked to the UFO phenomenon because some of the circular crop formations have appeared in areas where UFO activity had been previously reported. Because of the near time framing and close proximity of both UFO sightings and the discovery of some circular crop depressions, the assumption that UFOs had landed or near-landed in these areas and caused unusual depressions became popular.

Circles and other varieties of suspected UFO landing marks in soil, crops, swamps, and fields of wild grasses have been reported since the early 1950s in the United States and elsewhere in the world with sporadic frequency. Naturally, ufologists wishing to establish some sort of scientific proof regarding the presence of extraterrestrial space craft (either piloted or remote controlled) in our environment have performed an array of basically nonorganic tests of soil and crop depression samplings in an effort to discover what kind of energy source (generally believed to be linked to the UFO's propulsion system) might have produced the flattened, swirled, charred, decayed, or dried up appearance of the affected areas.

With equal tenacity, UFO sceptics and hard-core debunkers have attempted to demonstrate that birds, animals (e.g. deer and hedgehogs), weather, and common organic causes such as fungi (i.e. fairy rings) could produce many of the effects upon soil and crops that the ufologists find so baffling and mysterious.

But the new era of crop circle formations (roughly 1978 to date) had expanded the problem of linking residual evidence of this kind of UFO activity, animals or fungi because the circles have become increasingly larger and/or have taken on the appearance of intelligently executed symbols or designs which in crop circle parlance are called pictograms. Interestingly, these formations often appear with or without the corresponding UFO observations and so-called landing burn marks of the past and because of these more recent developments, the crop circles should be examined as being either of the generally circular kind (or simple depression-type circles), and further scrutinised as being potentially UFO generated or something that merely coincides with the UFO observations or some other kind of unusual occurrences or atmospheric conditions. In other words, the hypothetical UFOs discussed in this article may be of a plasma vortex variety, some other form of atmospheric or tectonic anomaly or even extraterrestrial space craft.

Moreover, because the crop circles and the UFO phenomenon seem to excite the human imagination in such a way as to induce a great deal of speculation and every kind of fantasy possible, it is little wonder that so many diverse, unusual and outrageous explanations of these mysteries have come to the fore. But because we also know that absurdity, delusion and mendacity as well as human wants, needs and desires also play a part in the make-up of the rumours that swirl around these events, we are obliged to remember that these events are not only manifested as bits and pieces of physical evidence of some sort, but as *human experiences* too.

For example, a psychic who came to the site to examine the crop damage informed me that he and his son had a very strong

impression that a huge helicopter had landed, or near crash-landed, in the field. He spoke of distinctly seeing (in his mind's eye) a tyre and wheel assembly of such an aircraft and that most of its metallic parts were dark green in colour (i.e. presumably a military craft).

Although imprints, gouges, holes or tyre marks of any kind were not discovered in the crops, it is interesting to note that another individual contacted me by phone a day or two later and described seeing several strange-looking helicopters flying about in another area of Montgomery County. The weird thing about these helicopters was that several (six or seven) men jumped out of them wearing large back-packs of some kind. The packs weren't parachutes because the men seemed to just fly about the helicopters without tumbling earthward. Apparently, parachutes were never deployed by the men during the incident and this aspect of the event seems to have disturbed the witness somewhat.

At face value, if true, this report sounds like some sort of high-tech military training manoeuvre involving the use of the so-called "jet packs" that the Air Force developed about thirty years ago. But it seems highly unlikely that a training exercise involving equipment of this kind would take place over populated civilian areas; that is, if such manoeuvres have ever been attempted.

Although there had not been any UFO reports filed prior to the radio/TV news announcements concerning the crop circles found at Limerick Township, several reports were filed with the *Pottstown Mercury* (a local newspaper) after the fact, placing UFO activity in the general vicinity of the crop damage. Unfortunately, the reporting parties did not identify themselves to the news staff, so there is no way of determining if the reports were genuine or merely the products of over-active imaginations, or commonplace misidentifications of conventional fixed-wing aircraft that may have been observed flying towards Philadelphia International Airport or the Pottstown Air Facility, which is only about four miles away from the site.

Theories

Speculative avenues of investigation involving theories that crop circles are produced by strong wind vortices, vortex plasmas, magnetic field changes and tectonic events (i.e. plate shifts) possibly taking place beneath the affected areas had been brought to the fore by several researchers. Similar theories have been applied to the study of UFO phenomena over the years and have produced very interesting, but seemingly inconclusive, results.

The problem may be that we are dealing with a variety of causes for the events which we carelessly lump together and call the crop circle phenomenon when, in fact, some of the crop damage may be caused by plasma vortex phenomena or some other kind of unusual or

unknown atmospheric anomaly, while still others may be the result of high levels of nitrogen or ammonia-laced fertiliser saturations that may weaken the crops' stalks and cause them to fail when subjected to gusty winds.

Intelligently made

Obviously, the pictograms are intelligently executed and we are, therefore, left with only two possibilities regarding their origin. Either they are man-made pranks or hoaxes; or perhaps they are specifically designed to provoke human interest in them. If they are man-made for some specific reason, we should attempt to determine if that reason is religious, ideological, sociological, psychological, political, or merely competitively and artistically expressive in nature.

In the last case, the crop circles would be closely akin to the graffiti that appear overnight in American cities and may be linked to socio-economic conditions and the egocentric needs of certain individuals to make their mark upon (or otherwise be noticed by) a seemingly indifferent society.

If the so-called authentic circles and pictograms are not man made, then we must consider the possibility that they may be extraterrestrially executed (by use of unknown mechanisms) as a form of communication with humankind. Why an alien life form would select fields of crops as a historical contact point rather than using a radio frequency or a daylight landing near some government institution should not be an overly critical consideration because we haven't had any prior experience with contacting alien intelligences and, therefore, could not possibly know what such a creature might consider to be appropriate diplomatic protocol.

Crop circle history

Since UFOs and crop circles have been reported since the Middle Ages and quite possibly before Biblical times, we are also left with the rather interesting possibility that we may not discover what generates crop circles at any time in the near future; and, like our ancestors, we will only be able to project our contemporary beliefs, world view (or Weltanschauung) upon these phenomena. This seems to have already taken place since UFOs (i.e. presumed super-technological devices) and crop circles have been tentatively linked by technologically accented means of study and conjecture by formation researchers, ufologists, the popular press, the electronic media, and the motion picture industry.

Legend building - the human factor

These all-too-human factors would be a very interesting area of research for social scientists, folklorists and theologians to explore because it would afford them an opportunity to follow the ongoing legend

building (or myth making) propensity of twenty-first century man concerning the UFOs, crop circles and pictograms. What's more, since news of crop formation appearances have compelled large numbers of individuals to visit the sites (indeed, groups of people that appear to exceed the expected number of common curiosity seekers) we are confronted with the distinct possibility that the crop circles are not only interesting to examine, but that they have also become something of a "magic circle" or "numinous place" for people who may be seeking a genuine mystical experience.

In addition to the above considerations, we might also ponder the possibility that the crop circle researchers, too, may be unconsciously affected by their forays into these magic circles; simply because the circles and pictograms, though distinct (as specific forms or designs) are, nevertheless, curiously ambiguous (like a gigantic Rorschach Plate) regarding their origin and possible significance for humankind.

In answer to many researchers' most provocative question: "Are all crop circles merely hoaxes?"

I personally believe that quite a number of them are created by pranksters. But the crop circles' effect upon many individuals in the global community is real enough, and that in itself makes them significant and worthy of further study. Should some of them turn out to be the products of, say, vortex plasmas, perhaps samples taken from the affected crops will tell us something about that phenomenon which will eventually point us in the direction of a new and truly marvellous source of energy.

Unlike reported UFO phenomena which usually leave very little behind in the way of trace (or residual) evidence, the crop circle phenomenon is all evidence that still manages to elude positive identification regarding its cause and purpose. So, instead of just asking what a crop circle is, perhaps we should also be asking *why* these things are appearing at this particular point in time?

When is a crop circle not a circle?

During a follow-up phone conversation with a crop formation researcher who was also present at the primary Limerick Township site on 26 May 1992 I was informed that "We should not base our concept of what a crop circle should look like upon the preconceived notions of a few self-proclaimed experts from the United Kingdom." (The researcher was obviously responding to circle expert Colin Andrews's assertion that several American investigators were over-zealous types who could not distinguish authentic crop formations from damage that was caused by heavy weather.)

The researcher continued, "Crop circles

may appear as ill-formed formations too. Indeed, damage which many researchers would not think to examine because it is not aesthetically appealing to our senses and, therefore, provokes little or no interest to us."

Still thinking that a circle should look something like a circle, I asked him, "How would one interpret the chaotic-looking damage found at Limerick Township in comparison to the far more precise circles and pictograms found in the United Kingdom and elsewhere?"

He replied, "The orderly appearance of the formations in Great Britain may be symbolically indicative of that society's collective physical state or condition; while ill-formed and chaotic-looking crop damage may be linked to the psychological, sociological, political and/or economic upheavals of a society in great distress."

I asked, "How could an adverse human or societal condition be manifested as a physical effect upon the Earth's surface and, in particular, upon fields of crops?" He expressed the belief that the Earth and those living upon it are connected in very subtle ways - ways that we cannot even imagine, perceive, or ever hope to scientifically weigh and measure.

He continued, "The Earth, like the human unconscious, speaks to us in terms that are not logical, but symbolic." I quickly asked, "And what is the bottom-line meaning of this kind of Gaian symbolism?" He replied, "Why do you think that archetypal symbols (i.e. circular airborne objects - UFOs) that used to be frequently seen in the skies are now appearing in man's bread basket?" It was food for thought because the number of UFO sightings had dropped off considerably in recent times, while reports of crop circles seemed to be coming in from all over the planet at an ever-increasing rate.

Unimpressed, but curious

Tom and I left the wheat field feeling that what we had observed was not what several other researchers who were present thought that they saw in the crops. Indeed, many of the wheat shafts were kinked and flattened close to the ground, not gently bent over. There were trails leading to and from the damage, even though we had been assured that none existed. More importantly, the formations in Montgomery County looked totally unlike the precise "cookie cutter" circles and pictograms found in England, Australia and Japan.

Still later, when I contacted a couple of circle investigators about the discrepancies I found in published accounts concerning the Montgomery County event, I was informed that the crops at Limerick, Linfield and Royersford were "hit again" and that new samples had revealed that the fields were subjected to some kind of energy (or force) which produced both an angular displacement of the wheat's upper shaft and a splitting of the

third or fourth nodes. Unfortunately, no one thought to contact Mr Carey or myself about the additional formations that had mysteriously appeared. So I guess we will have to wait on events before we form an opinion on what might have happened there. But, as things stand right now (speaking strictly as ufologists), Mr Carey and I are not convinced that crop circles and UFO phenomena are related in any way - except for the fact that the UFO enigma is a sort of magnet that attracts all sorts of other unusual events to it. That is why strange occurrences like cattle mutilations and other mysteries such as the Bermuda Triangle disappearances are believed to be UFO related. But simply because one cannot explain one mystery doesn't mean that we should project it upon another enigma and then assume that we actually know something about either one of them.

In July 1982 Mr Raymond Barnes was walking in the country near Westbury, Wiltshire in south-west England. Suddenly he heard a humming wind and the sound of falling corn. Within three seconds a corn circle had formed in the field beside him and, within the circle, the stalks lay swirled outward from the centre. Despite the flattening, the stems of the corn were not broken or kinked - they had simply bent over just above the ground.

There have been other eyewitness accounts of crop circles being formed by unusual misty whirlwinds that produced sound and tingling effects upon the observers who were caught in their wake. Unfortunately, the witnesses did not have video recorders with them at the time and could not fully document their experiences. So the investigation of the crop circle phenomenon continues, as does our pursuit for a better understanding of the UFO experience.

Scattered memories

So here it is, ten years later and I'm sitting on the porch writing this essay on my experience with a crop circle incident that still sparks debate over its authenticity. For the circle aficionados there is little doubt that something very unusual occurred on that Memorial Day weekend in Limerick, Pa.; while sceptics and several other circle experts seem to be content with the notion that the Limerick, Linfield and Royersford, Pa. crop falls were caused by a combination of heavy weather and the spindly condition of the crop itself.

I would later learn that a mid-western biologist who had examined samples taken from the sites felt that the wheat shafts had been subjected to some sort of unknown energy force, which caused them to swell and bend at right angles at the junction of their third or fourth nodes. When questioned by sceptics on his findings, the circle expert (who didn't actually have a PhD in biology), refused to share the samples (for a blind study analysis) with other researchers, claiming that

"such studies are for amateurs". So, as one crop circle proponent put it, "Those sceptics probably didn't ask him to participate in the study very nicely!"

Over the years, only one researcher has ever asked me for information on the Limerick incident and my brief contacts with other researchers who were present while Tom and I were investigating the matter ended within weeks of the incident. The press seemed to have a ball with the story and the local TV news people played the matter up quite seriously, while also having an obvious tongue-in-cheek attitude toward Tom and me during our on-site interviews.

Evening newscasts of the event were followed by off-the-cuff comments like, "Well, fellas, I guess they got away again", and similar gentle jibes. While at the site, a young newswoman shoved a microphone in my face while asking, "So, do you think that this is the big one?" I told her that I didn't know about that, but I would be willing to perform a radiological survey of the formation she was broadcasting from moments ago just to see if she was going to glow in the dark a bit later (end of interview!).

In search of . . .

The field was visited by young mothers with their children, older (often infirm) folks, curious college students, retired men with their buddies, a swami and his followers, Township officials, the media, and UFO and crop circle researchers from New York, Pennsylvania and Maryland.

The young policemen who first reported the incident rented a small plane just to fly over the field and photograph the damage. He sent samples taken from all three sites to a researcher to analyse. He would later express his belief that the crop damage was not storm related and enhanced by hoaxing college students.

And so it was that a chilly damp day and a muddy field failed to keep many folks from visiting the site of a crop circle formation that wasn't actually circular, symmetrical in design, or even vaguely artistic looking. During all of this, the farmer's claims that he'd seen crop falls of this kind several times over the years seemed to go unheard and be dismissed as the rantings of a local yokel who simply didn't want to see his crop trampled underfoot. As Tom and I left the field, a bus load of sightseers entered the driveway on the field's edge. Filled with curiosity and anticipation, they peered from the bus's windows, while the farmer just muttered, "Oh, no!" and rolled his eyes.

Perhaps we will never know exactly what happened in that Montgomery County wheat field, or if it was of scientific or historical significance, but a sociological phenomenon of the first magnitude did take place on that day in May.

LOOKING FOR HOAXES

Gareth J. Medway

IN MY LAST piece for the *Supplement* I committed the unforgivable sin of quoting a book, Martin Gardner's *Science: Good, Bad and Bogus*, from memory. Later I checked it and was unable to find the passages I had cited. Perhaps I had confused it with some other work.

The column produced a response on the UFO UpDates mailing list from Stanton Friedman, who states that Phil Klass "had never been to the Eisenhower Library", and that his uninformed criticisms were "typical of the intellectual bankruptcy of the pseudoscience of anti-ufology". He also states that my insinuation that only Bill Moore and Jaime Shandera would have had the knowledge to fake the MJ-12 papers is "total rubbish", and that *no one* could have done so at the time. The relevant documents, he says, "are still available from UFORI, POB 958, Houlton, ME 04730-0958 for those interested in real research as opposed to the armchair variety".

I have received no response to my challenge to produce some definite anachronism that would prove MJ-12 a hoax. I should like to explain what I mean by this. In 1983 Pierre Plantard de Saint-Clair showed the authors of *The Holy Blood and the Holy Grail* a notarised document, dated 29 August 1956, relating to certain ancient parchments that supposedly proved Plantard's claim to be the lawful monarch of France. It said that they were to be deposited in a strongbox of Lloyd's Bank European in London. It was eventually discovered that in 1956 the European branches of Lloyd's Bank had been called Lloyd's Bank Foreign. The name was only changed to Lloyd's Bank European in 1964. This proves that the document must have been forged many years after its ostensible date (see Baigeant, Leigh and Lincoln, *The Messianic Legacy*, chapter 18). Another example is Melvin Harris's *The True Face of Jack the Ripper*, 1994, which includes a lengthy statement, dated 1930, by a woman who said that she had known the Ripper. Though most writers think the murders stopped because the killer had died or been incarcerated, in this version he stopped murdering and lived at liberty for several years more, the witness having been involved with him in a cosmetics company in 1890. The premises, she said, were "in Baker Street on the site where Baker Street Tube Station now stands". Evidently, the author of this fiction was unaware that

Baker Street Station opened in 1863.

I am not aware of any comparable giveaway concerning MJ-12. The use of the phrase "Extraterrestrial biological entities" is suspicious, as it seems to have been coined by Paul Bennewitz in the 1970s, but it is impossible to prove this conclusively.

John Harney has repeatedly raised the question of how the US government could have kept a crashed flying saucer secret for more than half a century. He has received no coherent answer, but I would also ask: why bother? What is the motivation? According to the first MJ-12 document, dated 18 November 1952:

"Implications for the National Security are of continuing importance in that the motives and ultimate intentions of these visitors remain completely unknown. In addition, a significant upsurge in the surveillance activity of these craft beginning in May and continuing through the autumn of this year has caused considerable concern that new developments may be imminent. It is for these reasons, as well as the obvious international and technological considerations and the ultimate need to avoid a public panic at all costs, that the Majestic-12 Group remains of the unanimous opinion that imposition of the strictest security precautions should continue without interruption into the new administration."

This does not quite make sense. If they were able to "back-engineer" the Roswell wreckage, they would not be hindered in so doing if the world knew that they had it. As to the need to "prevent public panic", the US government has been accused of exaggerating the "Red Peril" at this time. Be that as it may, it certainly did not try to hide from its panicable citizens that the Soviet Union was developing nuclear weapons. Claiming that the USA had retrieved a crashed UFO and was working to duplicate its technology would actually have been a good publicity coup. As to the "upsurge" in UFO reports, by informing the public of this they could have ensured that sightings were properly reported, giving them a better chance of discerning the "unknown" intentions of the visitors. Whether or not they *could* have kept such a thing secret, no one convincingly explains why they should do so.

And now for something completely different
Recently I obtained a copy of the Varo Edition of Morris K. Jessup's *The Case for the UFO*. It

is said that grave misfortune awaits any possessor: "One person's home, along with the book, was destroyed by fire shortly after he acquired a copy. Capt. Edward J. Ruppelt, former head of project Blue Book, suffered a fatal heart attack, allegedly shortly after he read a borrowed copy. Robert Loftin, UFO author, who also died prematurely, was another rumoured owner of the book." So, if I am soon found dead of a heart attack in a house fire, you will know the reason why.

In 1955 a paperback copy of Jessup's *The Case for the UFO* was mailed to the Office of Naval Research in Washington, with marginal annotations in different coloured inks apparently made by three ufonauts, or else humans somehow familiar with the truth about UFOs. They discussed where Jessup was right and where he had got it wrong. The ONR had the book, complete with the marginalia, republished by the Varo company in Texas. In the 1970s it was reprinted by Gray Barker's Saucerian Press. Both editions were very small.

In 1979 Carl Allen (or Carlos Miguel Allende) who came from New Kensington, Pennsylvania, rather than outer space, told researcher Robert Goerman that he had written all the annotations himself. Where he got his information from was not explained.

Though the book may not tell us anything about extraterrestrial intelligence, it is interesting for what it says about the state of 1950s ufology. Why should the ONR have bothered with it? Their introduction began: "Notations that imply intimate knowledge of UFO's, their means of motion, their origins, background, history, and habits of beings occupying UFO's provide an interesting subject for investigation. Such notations were found in a copy of the paperback edition of M.K. Jessup's 'Case for the UFO's'. Because of the importance which we attach to the possibility of discovering clues to the nature of gravity, no possible item, however disputable from the point of view of classical science, should be overlooked."

In 1979 Larry Kusche of CSICOP located some former ONR officials, one of whom, Jack G. Smith, told him: "In the 1950s many engineers and scientists had not yet made up their minds about the reality of UFOs. Many of those at Varo were interested in UFOs basically as a lunchtime hobby, as others might play chess or debate the dangers of communism. Because the annotations were

such a jumble that no one could make any sense of them, Stanton [the president of Varo] hired a high school girl [Miss Michael Ann Dunn] to type them after school. Smith said that the project probably cost the grand total of a few hundred dollars. Copies were mimeographed and sent to various scientists and Navy officials, and the eventual conclusion of all concerned, including the men at ONR, was that the annotations made no sense at all." (*The Skeptical Inquirer*, Fall 1979, p. 60)

Jessup himself thought that almost any anomaly was proof of UFO reality. To this end he trawled through the books of Charles Fort for cases of inexplicable falling ice, stones, frogs, flesh and grain; archaeological erratics such as a metal cube found in a coal bed, astronomical puzzles such as dark spots on Jupiter; and, occasionally, UFO reports. His justification for this approach, insofar as he had one, was like this: "What, indeed do 'falling stones' have to do with UFOs? We shall list, herein, but a few of the more interesting and entertaining examples of stones having fallen from space, and we can note that quartz and other materials not of usual meteoric types indicate something other than meteors. Where else, then, but from UFOs?"

The annotator purports to explain much of this, commenting on the above: "Yes, quartz, it has its uses Electro-Magnetically and otherwise on the Home-ships" - though if so I do not see why they should go around dropping it. The flesh was "SPOILED FOOD", and a mysterious yellow substance that fell in

great quantities in Pictou Harbour, Nova Scotia, was caused by "Monthly-Ship-Cleaning".

There are two sorts of ufonaut, the L-Ms and the S-Ms, the L-Ms being "PALS", but the S-Ms less friendly. It is apparent that "L-M" meant "Little-Men" as the term is occasionally written in full, but no explanation was provided for S-M. Apparently neither race are aliens, but distant relatives of humans who developed advanced technologies in the days of the lost continents of Mu and Lemuria, and who now live in bases under the sea, on the Moon, and in space in big "arks" - which explains the dark spots of Jupiter. Likewise, the inner moon of Mars is "an old 'Dead-Ark', S-M MAKE". They are vastly superior to "Proud, Vain Humankind", from whom great contempt is expressed, in particular the "badly frightened or Strictly Orthodox Namby-Pamby Scientists". As to the massive fortress at Sacsahuaman in Peru (a staple of Ancient Astronaut authors): "L-M's Built this before deciding to go Undersea". Some of the remarks are clearly not meant seriously: when Jessup describes the Byland Abbey saucer as a "Round, flat, silver object called a discus which flew over the monastery exciting maximum terrorem among the brethren", the comment is: "YES, LMS INTRODUCED DISCUS THROWING".

This was years before the Hill case, but the abduction scenario was already starting to develop, though here it was supposed that abductees were not actually returned. One of Jessup's types of evidence consisted of events

such as that of the *Mary Celeste*. "Crews have mysteriously disappeared from ships - sometimes within sight of their home port - without warning and without trace." To this it is said: "HEH! IF HE ONLY KNEW WHY, HE'D DY OF SHOCK". In 1593 a soldier standing guard in the Philippines suddenly found himself thousands of miles away in Mexico City, and this was due to their having tried to take him: "He fought Like a Mad-Man & could not be taken aboard, so he was Let-down. They kept his rifle, though".

There is even advice on how to avoid abduction: "No Man Wearing Hob-Nail boots or Cleats on shoes has ever been known to have been 'stolen'. Neither a Man in a cave under earth. When I am hunting in Woodland: I make My Mind a BLANK & always get animals at Close range. HOL-M [i.e. a holy man] can quiet his Mind thusly. So it is that all animals are silent when they are near. If man can KEEP His Mind as a Lifeless clod, He can escape Detection from the L-Ms or S-Ms in this way. They 'feel' you out, in the country, in Cities Listen to Birds. IF BIRDS DONT SING, BE READY." [105] A letter in *Fate*, March 1951, quoted by Jessup, described how during a UFO sighting "Not a creature was stirring, not a breath of wind". "IF THIS HAPPENS, COVER YOURSELF WITH EARTH." [132] It appears from this that the "Oz effect", first identified by Jenny Randles in the late 1970s, was known to at least a few people decades earlier.

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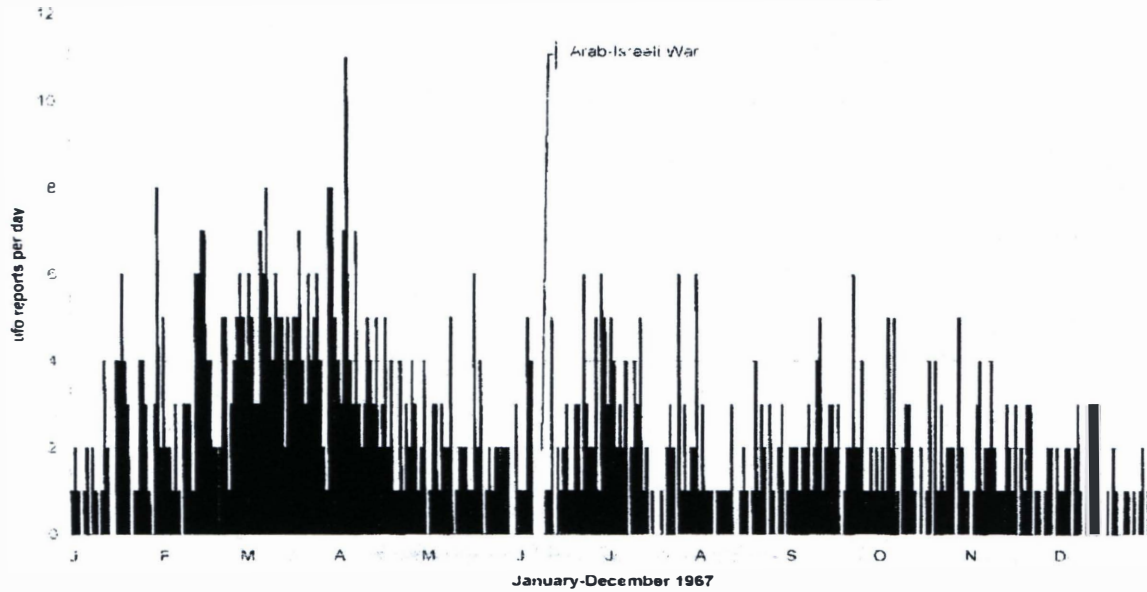
Martin S. Kottmeyer

ON 25 MAY 1977, Thomas Bearden solved the UFO mystery using what he termed a "metapsychological species analysis." It was an attempt to expand Jungian psychology into

UFO and Fortean studies. In his critique, UFO phenomena are tulpeid manifestations of collective tension. "Each major UFO wave must be directly connected with a peaking of

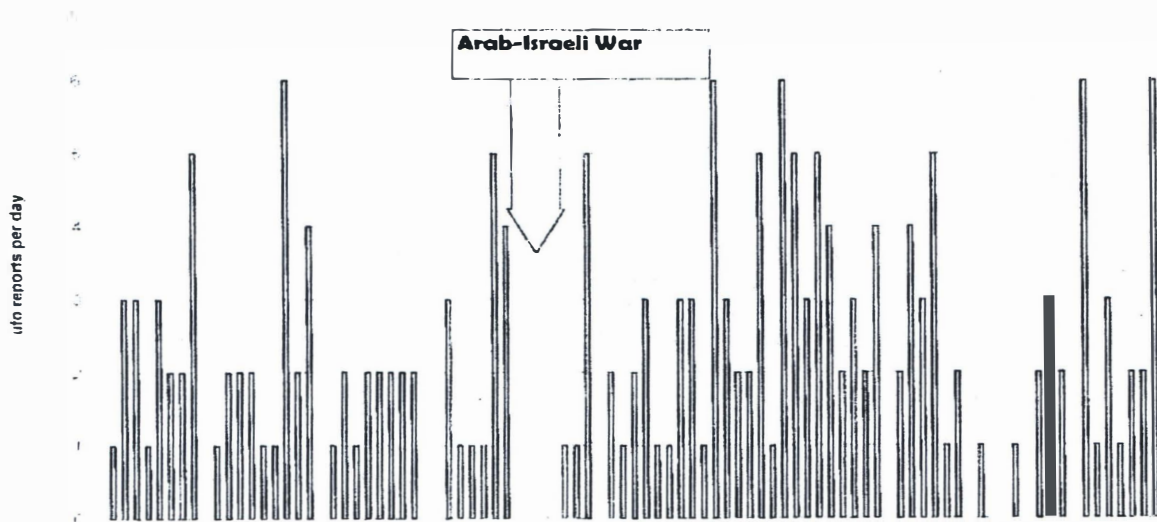
the cold war pressure in the collective unconscious, and it is." Highlights of his metapsychiatric analysis include identifying the Swedish ghost rocket wave of 1946 as

1967 UFO activity



This chart shows all UFO activity for 1967 and it is fairly blatant that it is mostly concentrated in the first half of the year; well before the Arab-Israeli War. (4)

Arab-Israeli war of 5-10 June 1967



This chart shows more clearly the absence of UFO activity during the days of the Arab-Israeli War of 5-10 June 1967.

penis symbolism, the Kenneth Arnold case as female mandalas modulated by a pilot's unconscious, and the 1973 October Wave as a response to the Yom Kippur War. The primary prediction arising from this analysis was "the Soviet Union is preparing to attack the United States in the near future". Secondly, "the last metapsychological indicator or symptom prior to the attack will be a wave of paranormal sexual mutilations of human females in the United States". That month - May 1977 - one such case happened in the Greater Boston area, thus it appeared that "the moment of truth for the West is imminent, and more such appalling cases are to appear in the immediate future". The raising of the kundalini of the entire human species was alleged by Bearden to be underway yielding a paroxysm of insanity and a dramatic forcing. He concluded, "The final agony of the birth of Man - or his death - is begun." (1)

Reprinting the paper in October-December 1978 for his journal *Specula*, Bearden added an introductory note admitting, "no wave of human female mutilations has occurred". But the larger theory was becoming more convincing to him. He recently saw a paper by Richard Hall titled "1967: The Overlooked UFO Wave and the Colorado Project" in the *Proceedings of the 1978 MUFON UFO Symposium* (pp. 52-74) and realised this obviously resulted from the 1967 Arab-Israeli War. (2) There were a couple of unrealised problems here. Hall did not graph this wave in the paper so Bearden perhaps lacked a clear idea of the distribution of reports over time during 1967. A table accompanied the paper, however, and a careful consideration of the number of UFO reports in each month would have warned him that most of the UFO activity happens in the early months of the year before the Arab-Israeli War in June. Specifically, the highest numbers appear in February and March. The month of the war is the fifth lightest month. An independent analysis of the day-to-day changes reveals the problem is even worse on close scrutiny. Four days of the Five Day War present a sequence of zero UFO activity (see charts).

I have heard it suggested that the sexual indignities suffered by women in alien abductions in the works of Hopkins, Jacobs, etc. could be weak evidence confirming the secondary prediction. They would be the psychic metaphoric equivalent of a wave of female mutilations. Ultimately though, the theory fails in the primary concern that the Soviet Union would attack and Man die. The Berlin Wall eventually fell and the Cold War ended instead. We might as well complain also that in these first two presentations, Bearden's theory failed to address several important American UFO waves - 1952, 1965 and 1966. Also, there is no recognition that major UFO waves have happened in areas like France and South America that should be relatively

unaffected by the tensions of the cold war. Lastly, there has arisen the pleasant problem that the UFO myth did not collapse or UFO reporting cease synchronistically with the end of the Cold War.

Bearden's 1980 book *Excalibur Briefing* repeats many of the observations in this paper and restates his basic premise is "The great unresolved conflict in the human species since World War II has been the Cold War. And therefore the great flaps of tulpoidal UFO activity should correlate directly to the Cold War." This is elaborated upon with a peculiar table that appears to allege there were peak pressure surges on the collective unconscious associated with critical phases of the Korean War in 1950 and 1952, Sputnik in 1959, the Cuban missile crisis of 1962, and the 1973 Arab-Israeli War. These resulted in Waves in 1950, 1952, 1959/60, 1962 and 1973. It is surely strange that Bearden seems to think there are major waves in 1950, 1959/60, 1962. These years seem relatively quiescent in terms of UFO activity. Sputnik, in truth, happened in 1957, not 1959. There did appear a striking spike of UFO activity in 1957 coincident with the launch of the second Sputnik. *Excalibur Briefing* offers no interpretation of the true flaps of the mid-60s, not even the 1967 wave he was earlier so pleased with. He reaffirms that UFOs are precognitive indicators, signs in the sky, that Armageddon is imminent, but adds that it will result in a great change of state: "Man literally is and shall be a god, one with God, just as the prophets have foretold." (3)

Looking back from 2003, the major predictions of this solution to the flap problem look unfulfilled. The theory had large problems and they have only grown worse. The connection alleged between the 1973 Wave and the Yom-Kippur War seems fairly doubtful given that the 1967 Arab-Israeli War had no effect, or rather had an effect that looks opposite to the claims of the theory. Though it is perverse to say it, Bearden should be credited for directing attention to this odd situation. This curious gap in UFO activity in the flurry of Sixties ufoia suggests to theoretically minded people that the Arab-Israeli War temporarily suppressed whatever the actual cause or causes of UFO reporting were operating in that period. Most probably, that would have been either news about the Vietnam War or race conflicts, both the main emotional issues engulfing America in that period. The Arab-Israeli War was a shocker that took over the opening of news shows and front page headlines. For a few crucial days, Vietnam was pushed out of awareness. And so, too, apparently, UFOs.

It would be unfair to damn all crisis theories of UFO flaps on the basis of this particular version. It will be objected that there are versions by people with better pedigrees, less of a New Age mindset, or

cooler judgment using other factors. They deserve their own days in court, I fully agree. Still, I feel this one had a couple lessons to teach us that revisiting those 'better' versions would not bring to light.

References

1. Thomas E. Bearden, "Species Metapsychology, UFO Waves, and Cattle Mutilations" *Fortean Times*, issue 26, Summer 1978, pp. 14-20.
2. Reprinted with an introductory note in *Specula*, Vol. 1, No.4, October-December 1978, pp. 24-35.
3. Thomas E. Bearden, *Excalibur Briefing* Walnut Hill, 1980, pp. 188-94, 200-1, 221-7
4. Charts based on data derived from Project Blue Book files

EDITORIAL

In this issue (see 'Literary Criticism') I make some critical remarks about the cranks who write drivel about ancient astronauts and energy which can be extracted from the 'ether' (but only when there are no sceptics present).

Recently, this newsletter has also dealt at length with the Trindade Island case, and we have shown that many of the often-repeated details of the story are untrue, and that it was almost certainly a hoax.

It is certainly not the only hoax, as other notorious ones include Trans-en-Provence, the Walton abduction and the Linda Napolitano abduction.

Many ufologists, frustrated by the lack of evidence or credible testimony to support their belief in the ETH, like to cheer themselves up by attacking the sceptics. However, even some of them are gradually coming round to a more rational attitude. A good example of this is the discussion on UFO UpDates about the antics of Linda Moulton Howe in giving support to a notorious Brazilian cultist and UFO hoaxter. Some people are now beginning to re-examine her previous work to take a more critical look at it.

If you find the scepticism in *Magonia* and *Magonia Supplement* irritating and you prefer to take a more indulgent attitude to people who make extraordinary claims, just remember that we have been publishing since 1968 and never once have we been caught out and had to issue corrections or apologies for being too sceptical. Our sceptical assessments have *never* been proved wrong, and are never likely to be.



LITERARY CRITICISM

Tenet insanabile multos scribendi cacoethes et aegro in corde senescit.

Juvenal, *Satires*, vii. 51

John Harney submits some UFO magazines to a pelicanist analysis

SOME UFOLOGISTS occasionally like to sneer at *Magonia*, so I'll devote this review to sneering at some other UFO magazines. There are a few other magazines rather similar to *Magonia*, but I don't know of any English-language ones. As for the generality of UFO journals, the ones which attempt to maintain fairly large circulations naturally have an editorial policy of pleasing as many people as possible, usually with hilarious results, as pseudoscientific drivel jostles with purely factual articles about astronomy or developments in space technology. Most of the others seem to have editors who have a few screws loose, quite unlike *Magonia* of course.

UFO Magazine (USA), in its June/July 2003 issue (Vol. 18, No. 3), is attempting to rehabilitate Immanuel Velikovsky, famous for his strange theory that a comet somehow changed into what is now the planet Venus, causing the plagues described in Exodus in the process. To assist him in his endeavour the editor has called on that other genius and "ancient astronauts" expert, Zecharia Sitchin, whose "extensive scholarship and in-depth knowledge of ancient languages and culture gives added credence to his thesis that in ancient times Earth was host to advanced visiting extraterrestrials". No, I'm not kidding.

Another item guaranteed to arouse the ire of sceptics is a totally uncritical article about the Raelians by the ludicrously credulous Sean Casteel.

Other delights include an article about notorious abductionist David Jacobs. "As outlined in his most controversial book, *The Threat*, the alien body politic, consisting of several different species, are apparently working together in a hierarchical collective towards the steady domination, and possibly assimilation, of humans." The writer of this piece, Jolene Rae Harrington, doesn't seem to see any problems with this insane notion.

In a scientific journal the term "free energy" usually refers to wind or water power, or solar radiation. But in journals which are not so scientific it usually means energy which

can somehow allegedly be extracted from the "ether", a concept used by 19th-century physicists who assumed that some sort of all-pervading medium was needed for the transmission of electromagnetic waves, just as sound can be transmitted through solids, liquids or gases, but not through a vacuum.

In *UFO Magazine* we are told that: "Despite the last century's attempt from the Priests of Science to ridicule into silence anyone who examined this 'old fashioned' and 'disproved' theory, qualified physicists and philosophers continue to investigate what the ether is and what it can do." Apart from a few physicists who still find the notion useful for some purposes, most of those who write about the ether are obviously either cranks or confidence tricksters. In their article, Dr Bob and Zohara Hieronimus mention the usual people, such as Trevor James Constable and Wilhelm Reich. They interviewed Dr Gene Mallove, publisher of *Infinite Energy Magazine*, who is an admirer of the work of Dr Paulo and Alexandra Correa, who run an outfit called the Aurora Biophysics Research Institute, near Toronto, Canada. Allegedly, the Correas "have invented self-running motors that they call 'ether motors' which run completely under their own power. . . Apparently, the Correas are extracting energy from the ether."

But Mallove reminds us that "no one is ever going to prove this to a skeptical person, and it's completely appropriate that this be the case." So that's why these gadgets have not come into general use to revolutionise industry and transport. Just imagine if the Wright brothers had found that their aircraft could never get off the ground when there were sceptics present!

You can find an equally daft article on a similar theme in the latest issue of the UK *UFO Magazine* (June 2003). This is introduced by editor Graham Birdsall as "a mind-numbing article by Graham Ennis, who has a 100% proven track record on everything he has previously said or predicted within

these pages during the past three years." Believe it or not.

One thing he predicted, in the October 2001 issue of *UFO Magazine*, was that the Russian scientist Evgeny Podkletnov was working on a gadget which would "generate a beam of gravitational energy". He has now succeeded, according to Ennis, who writes: "Although it is probably capable of going way beyond that, the beam can apparently knock over several small-sized objects."

Ennis can allow us to know only tantalising snippets of information though. "For the time being at least, I am not prepared to say anything in public about my theoretical work, or how the theory of electrogravitics and that of zero point energy, both of which are interconnected, are evolving." However, he is sharing lots of information "off the record" with editor Graham Birdsall.

There are some reasonable articles, but these are of the type which can be found in most popular science journals.

In *Flying Saucer Review* (Vol. 47, No. 4, Winter 2002), editor Gordon Creighton devotes much of the space, as usual, to translations from Jorge Martin's Spanish-language Puerto Rican magazine *Evidencia OVNI*, as he is " . . . by far the wisest, most experienced, and certainly the most active and vigorous of the UFO investigators throughout the entire Spanish-American world . . . "

In a review of *UFOs and Abductions* (ed. David Jacobs, University Press of Kansas, 2000), Creighton notes that Jerome Clark describes him as "the deeply paranoid Gordon Creighton". He remarks: "In view of my own allegedly high rating for paranoia, our readers will surely not be too surprised if I say that my favourite piece by Jerome Clark is this article which I republish below, 'Why UFOs are hostile', which had originally appeared on pages 18-20 of *FSR* 13/6 (November-December 1967)."

Perhaps readers would like to know my general impression of this article? My verdict is: "deeply paranoid".

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